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## Book Reviews [The Rhythm, by Leo J. Latz]

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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The Reverend Ignatius Cox will start a series of lectures on Catholic Hour, beginning Sunday, October 8th, at 6 P.M. E.S.T. over Station WEAJ. The general theme of these broadcasts will centre on God, Man, and Redemption

Attention is drawn to an interesting article by Father Cox in the August *Scientific American*.

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**M**ANHATTAN GUILD—The next meeting of the Catholic Physicians' Guild of Manhattan will be held on Wednesday evening, November 15th. Dr. Alexander Fraser will give an address on "The Biologic Basis of Eugenics and its Common Fallacies."

Dr. Fraser is Professor of Pathology in the University Bellevue Hospital Medical College, also Pathologist to St. Vincent's Hospital and to New York Foundling Hospital. The place of the meeting will be decided upon later. The Guild hopes to secure a prominent clergyman to discuss the moral points involved in the practice of eugenic theories.

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**B**ROOKLYN GUILD—The Catholic Physicians' Guild, Brooklyn Chapter, hopes to present to its members and their Catholic and non-Catholic medical friends, a series of timely lectures on various phases of Pastoral Medicine.

These talks are to be given throughout the coming Fall, Winter, and Spring at dates to be announced later.

The Guild will open its Fall Lecture Series with an address by Rev. Wm. G. Ryan of Brooklyn, N. Y. Father Ryan has made a thorough study of the medical and moral phases of the somewhat recent "Latz Rhythm Theory" and will present his views to the members at the next meeting of the Guild, to be announced shortly.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

THE RHYTHM. By Leo J. Latz, A.B., M.D., LL.D. Third revised edition. Published by the Latz Foundation, Chicago, Ill.

**T**HIS work, published with ecclesiastical approbation, has, in eight months, gone to the thirty-fifth thousandth copy—a remarkable record. It presents the physiological, practical and ethical aspects of the work of Ogino and Knaus regarding the periods when conception is impossible and when possible. It is written in simple style, easy of understanding by the non-medical person, its context being presented under the captions of questions and answers. This makes for quick reading, by means of which any matter of doubt in the subject is

quickly overcome. Italics are used to intensify important points. It quotes as a reason for its application and how it differs from the use of contraceptive measures, the catechism, "What Is Marriage?" by Vermeersch-Bouscaren:

"As long as the act takes place normally it remains objectively directed toward its primary end, which is generation, and since, according to the maxim that the purpose of the law is not within the matter of the law (*finis legis non cadit sub legem*), there is no obligation, while observing the law, to intend the end for which it was promulgated, it follows that the act is not necessarily vitiated by deliberately choosing a certain time with the intention of avoiding conception. Of course, the couple are bound to welcome any children that might come, if, as sometimes happens, their plan fails. The conjugal intercourse, at any rate, serves the other ends of marriage.

"Besides, let us observe that there is a great difference between the practice of birth control and the restricted use of marriage of which we speak. The abuses of birth control can be practiced constantly; they give free rein to passion, they do not demand the exercise of any moral force whatever; whereas this limited use of marriage requires, for the voluntary abstinence on certain days, a moral force the exercise of which is not without its social value."

In every way the work is well intended, presents all that is important in the subject, and covers the Catholic position on it against the poor, flashy and emotional propaganda of the birth controllers. If it is true that some Catholic women go to the birth-control clinics, then in this work we have a method for the control of this. It is also most probable that many non-Catholic women and their physicians would in self-respect adopt these rules. This would do away with the contraceptive measures dangerous to health.

This journal recommends a study of this book with a view to test the accuracy of the method suggested. The moral principles involved in the use of this method were explained in an article printed in this journal in the March number.

It is well to recall that the Congregation of the Sacred Penitentiary, in response to a question as to the lawfulness of a confessor advising the use of a safe period to penitents who were practicing onanism, answered: "The confessor is allowed, with *prudence*, to suggest this practice to those couples whom he has in vain endeavored by the use of other means to draw away from the hateful crime of onanism." This is obviously a principle to be followed also by the physician. If words mean anything, these words signify that the advice, with regard to the use of this method, is to be given by individuals to individuals and that prudence demands the avoidance of undue publicity.